

Costs and Uses of Electronic Monitoring

Background. Community-Based Corrections (CBC) District Departments have been using electronic monitoring devices since FY 1988 as a supervision tool for offenders on parole or probation. Generally, the electronic monitoring devices are used within the Intermediate Criminal Sanctions Program as defined by Iowa Code chapter [901B](#). Offenders placed on electronic monitoring are usually high-risk, repeat offenders that are also being supervised according to the policies of the Intensive Supervision Program. This program requires the offender to have a variety of multiple contacts each week with a Parole/Probation Officer (PPO). Examples of the type of offenses that may result in an offender being placed on electronic monitoring include Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) Third Offense, domestic violence, and sex offenses.

Sex Offenders. Starting in FY 2006, Iowa law required a minimum of five years of electronic monitoring for offenders under CBC supervision for certain offenses against a minor, including sexually violent offenses. The General Assembly modified the electronic monitoring requirements during the 2009 Legislative Session in Iowa Code section [692A.124](#) to permit sex offenders to be supervised by electronic monitoring based on a risk assessment validated by the Department of Corrections (DOC). From FY 2006 through FY 2014, the number of offenders on electronic monitoring grew by about 86.5%. Sex offenders remain the majority of the electronic monitoring population. See the [Electronic Monitoring Report](#) issued by the [DOC](#) in November 2014 for more detailed information regarding the type of devices and lead offenses of affected offenders.

Uses of Electronic Monitoring. Offenders are placed on electronic monitoring for enforcement of a curfew (home detention), as an intermediate sanction for those offenders that fail to comply with the terms of the probation or parole agreement, or to monitor an offender's alcohol consumption. With technological advances over the years, and the development of Global Positioning System (GPS) devices, electronic monitoring is now used to track an offender's location. Immediate reporting capability is possible when the GPS device is used in conjunction with a cell phone. The capacity of the CBC District Departments, the DOC, and the Judicial Branch (Juvenile Court Officers supervise juvenile offenders) to respond to immediate reporting is limited.

DOC Program. Beginning in FY 2010, the DOC, in cooperation with the [Board of Parole](#), implemented an electronic monitoring program for offenders in prison convicted of serious offenses. These are usually offenders sentenced to lengthy prison terms that are nearing release. They are generally in minimum custody status and work outside the secure perimeter of the prison for some portion of the day to begin preparing them for release from prison. These offenders are required to be on an electronic monitoring device while outside the secure perimeter. The number of offenders in this program is limited. At the end of FY 2014 there were seven offenders on GPS devices, all at the North Central Correctional Facility at Rockwell City.

More Information

Iowa General Assembly: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/>
Iowa Department of Corrections: <http://www.doc.state.ia.us>
Fifth Judicial District department of Corrections Services: <http://www.fifthdcs.com/>
Iowa Board of Parole: <http://www.bop.state.ia.us/>

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Funding. The General Fund appropriation to the [Fifth](#) CBC District Department includes approximately \$2.0 million to fund electronic monitoring statewide. This includes the command center at the Fort Des Moines Residential Facility and the costs of the electronic monitoring devices. The chart below shows the types of devices and the daily costs for each type from FY 2011 through FY 2015.

	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Voice Verification	\$ 1.85	\$ 1.85	\$ 1.85	\$ 1.85	\$ 1.85	\$ 1.85
Radio Frequency	2.28	1.98	1.98	1.91	1.55	1.55
Vicap (alcohol)/MEMS*	5.00	4.50	3.92	3.92	3.10	3.10
Radio Frequency (Cellular)	5.40	3.22	2.91	2.91	2.25	2.25
GPS Active	5.50	8.25	8.25	8.25	3.15	3.15
GPS Passive	3.89	3.84	3.84	3.84	3.10	3.10
MEMS (Cellular)	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.50	3.50
*MEMS is Mitsubishi Electronic Monitoring System						
Source: Fifth Judicial District Department of Correctional Services						

The cost of the devices has generally decreased over the years. The DOC and the CBC District Departments operate under the Western States Contracting Alliance ([WSCA](#)), and the current vendor is [3M](#). Competitive bidding, technological advances, and bulk purchasing has driven down the cost of the devices.